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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000885

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SUBJECT: DIET GROUP CALLS FOR SIX-PARTY RESUMPTION AND
U.S.-DPRK TALKS, APOLOGIZES FOR PRESS LEAK

Classified By: Charge James P. Zumwalt, reasons 1.4 (b, d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: A group of Diet members that supports Japan-DPRK normalization has called for an early resumption of the Six-Party Talks and, during a meeting with Embassy Tokyo Political Minister-Counselor, urged the United States to pursue bilateral discussions with the DPRK. The leader of this group, Taku Yamasaki, later apologized to Embassy Tokyo for his colleague's indiscretion in leaking to a newspaper the contents of the meeting and misquoting Minister-Counselor Meserve. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) The leadership of a Diet group that supports Japan-DPRK normalization called on Political Minister-Counselor Meserve April 16 to deliver their group's statement on the DPRK's recent decision to leave the Six-Party Talks and discuss (off-the-record) recent DPRK-related matters. Senior LDP politician and faction leader Taku Yamasaki, LDP defense expert Gen Nakatani and opposition DPJ Upper House member Yoshihiro Kawakami noted that the statement called on the DPRK to return soon to the Six-Party Talks and urged the Japanese government pursue diplomatic measures to induce the North's return to the talks. On the UNSC's Presidential Statement, Yamasaki said it was significant that China supported the statement's strong content, and surmised that the DPRK is probably unhappy with China and "feels betrayed."

13. (C) The U.S.-DPRK relationship has "started to change," Yamasaki continued, and the DPRK may react positively to the U.S. decision to accept a Presidential Statement rather than push for a UNSCR. At the same time, the DPRK believes that China turned its back on it. "That's why now is the time for the U.S. to act," Yamasaki said. For now, it is probably impossible to hold Six-Party Talks, so it is a good idea for the U.S. and DPRK to find a way to "break the deadlock," he said.

14. (C) Kawakami asked if the U.S. will have direct talks with the DPRK, noting that he heard Secretary Clinton is "positive about bilateral talks." Minister-Counselor Meserve responded that we continue to value highly the Six-Party process, as Secretary Clinton said during her recent visit to Tokyo, adding that it is highly regrettable that North Korea had announced it was pulling out of the Six-Party Talks. Kawakami said that the U.S. and DPRK should "start first," as Japan and the DPRK cannot start now.

15. (C) Yamasaki noted that Japan's unilateral sanctions on the North have had little effect so far. Although many Japanese call on Japan to impose more sanctions, that would merely stiffen the DPRK's attitude, he said. In response to Kawakami's question about what will happen absent further Six-Party meetings, Meserve noted that Secretary Clinton said the Six-Party Talks are a vital forum for discussions. To

pursue denuclearization, all six parties must participate, he added.

¶6. (C) Yamasaki said U.S.-DPRK talks should be held in order to resume the Six-Party Talks. Yamasaki plans to visit China and meet with VFM Wu Dawei in early May to "sound out" China. He further stressed that his Diet group is the "only group that has a channel to the DPRK." The Japanese government doesn't have a pipeline like this, and many Diet members care only about the abductions issue. Yamasaki said that he doesn't like the DPRK, but nonetheless he wants to deal with the North to address the nuclear, missile and abduction issues based on the Pyongyang Declaration.

¶7. (C) Comment: Although the meeting - held at the behest of the Diet group in Meserve's Embassy office after close of business - was strictly billed as an off-the-record discussion, Kawakami not only leaked the discussion to the press, but he also misquoted Meserve. An article in the April 17 edition of the Nikkei reads:

Members of the Parliamentarian League for Promoting the Normalization of Relations between Japan and North Korea, a nonpartisan group led by former Liberal Democratic Party Vice President Taku Yamasaki, yesterday visited the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. According to Democratic Party of Japan Upper House member Yoshihiro Kawakami, the league requested that U.S.-North Korea talks be held on restarting the Six-Party Talks. In reply, Political Minister-Counselor Meserve reportedly replied: "We will make efforts first to find a breakthrough in the situation through U.S.-North Korea talks,

TOKYO 00000885 002 OF 002

premised on (maintaining) the framework of the Six-Party Talks."

Minister-Counselor Meserve made no such statement. Yamasaki apologized to Embassy Tokyo for the leak and mis-quote.
ZUMWALT